

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6469

S E C R E T BANGKOK 13785

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS DOD, JCS, CINCPAC, CINCPACAF, NSA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, US

SUBJ: NEXT STEPS IN THAILAND

REF: BANGKOK 13769

1. FOLLOWING THE TRANSMISSION OF REFTEL I HAD BRIEF BUT MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND LATER WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AT A RECEPTION.

2. PRIME MINISTER TOLD ME HE HAD HAD A MEETING WITH QTE THE GENERALS AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY UNQTE AND DECISIONS HAD BEEN TAKEN WHICH HE THOUGHT WOULD BE GOOD FOR THAILAND AND FOR THE U.S. HE ASKED ME WHETHER I HAD YET MET WITH PHICHAI.

3. I SAID THAT MASTERS AND I HAD JUST HAD A MEETING WITH HIM THIS AFTERNOON. WHEN ASKED HOW THE MEETING HAD GONE, I ANSWERED THAT FRANKLY IT HAD BEEN VERY INCONCLUSIVE. I HAD MADE SOME SUGGESTIONS ON WAYS IN WHICH WE BELIEVED VARIOUS ARRANGEMENTS COULD BE WORKED OUT. PHICHAI HAD ASKED ME TO PREPARE A MEMO REPEATING WHAT I HAD SAID. I WOULD DO SO BY MONDAY AND HOPED WE COULD GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS AS SHIPS WERE MOVING AND WE WOULD HAVE TO REACH DECISIONS VERY SOON.

4. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT A MEMO WAS UNNECESSARY. THIS WAS NO WAY TO GET ON WITH THE JOB. I AGREED, NOTING THAT MOST OF

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THE ISSUES WERE VERY CLEAR CUT. I ADDED THAT THERE SEEMED TO ME

TO BE A TENDENCY IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO MAKE THINGS MORE COMPLICATED THAN THEY NEEDED TO BE AND TO GO INTO UNNECESSARY DETAILS. I SAID I THOUGH WE WERE SENSITIVE TO THAI POLITICAL IMPERATIVES BUT THAT I REALLY DIDN'T THINK WE SHOULD FUSS OVER WHETHER FOUR MEN OR SIX WERE NEEDED FOR A PARTICULAR TASK PROVIDED WE STAYED UNDER THE OVER ALL CEILING.

5. THE PRIME MINISTER AGREED. PHICHAJ IS VERY CAPABLE, HE SAID, BUT IT IS DIFFICULT FOR HIM AT THE FORIEGN MINISTRY. I SAID I UNDERSTOOD.

6. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WOULD SEND HIS ADVISER, NITHIPAT, TO SEE ME TO HELP WORK THINGS OUT. I REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD BE FINE BUT THAT I DIDN'T WANT TO MUDDY THE WATERS WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. THE IMPORTANT THING WAS TO REACH AGREEMENTS QUICKLY AND NOT TO FOOL AROUND. THE PRIME MINISTER AGREED BUT MURMMURED THAT I SHOULD STAY IN TOUCH AND I SAID I WOULD.

7. I THEN CHATTED WITH PHICHAJ WHO SAID HE THOUGHT OUR TALK HAD BEEN HELPFUL. I SAID THAT I WOULD GET THE MEMO TO HIM ON MONDAY AND HOPED WE COULD GET ON WITH MAKING SOME DECISIONS. PHICHAJ SAID THAT HE REALLY HOPED WE COULD WORK SOMETHING OUT ON THE AIT. THIS WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO THAILAND.

8. I SAID THAT I WANTED TO MAKE SURE THERE WAS NO MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE AIT. I SYMPATHIZED WITH THE THAI DESIRE TO KEEP THE AMMUNITION HERE AND HAD PASSED ON THE RTG'S WISHES, BUT THE AIT WAS NEEDED ELSEWHERE AND I COULDN'T GUARANTEE THAT IT WOULD STAY IF IT WASN'T BOUGHT. I WENT ON TO SAY THAT WHILE THE ISSUES WE HAD BEEN DISCUSSING EACH STOOD ON ITS OWN MERIT, THERE APPEARED TO BE AN ELEMENT OF LINKAGE IN OUR TALK TODAY. WHILE WASHINGTON WAS NOT RPT NOT LINKING THE AIT TO SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS, ONE HAD TO RECOGNIZE THE POSSIBILITY THAT PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES MIGHT BE COLORED BY HOW THINGS WORKED OUT.

9. PHICHAJ SAID HE UNDERSTOOD AND THAT I SHOULD FEEL FREE TO ARRANGE A PRIVATE MEETING WITH HIM WHENEVER I FELT IT WOULD BE USEFUL. I REPLIED THAT I THOUGHT I UNDERSTOOD SOME OF

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THE CROSS CURRENTS IN OUR AFTERNOON MEETING AND THAT IT MIGHT WELL BE A GOOD IDEA TO MEET PRIVATELY IN THE NEAR FUTURE. TIME REALLY WAS RUNNING OUT AND DECISIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE TAKEN SOON. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD.

10. COMMENT: AS THE DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE SURMISED, WE SENSE THAT THE TONE OF THIS AFTERNOON'S MEETING WAS TEMPERED BY PICHAI'S DESIRE TO SHOW THE FLAG IN FRONT OF ANAN AND TO PRESS FOR AS

GOOD A DEAL AS POSSIBLE ON THE AIT WITH THE OBLIQUE HINT THAT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE INSTALLATIONS MIGHT DEPEND ON THIS. I AM GLAD TO HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO RESPOND IN A WAY WHICH I HOPE WILL MAKE CLEAR THAT HE CANNOT HOPE TO GET PROMPT RESOLUTION OF THE AIT QUESTION WHILE STONEWALLING US ON THE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS.

11. THE OTHER ISSUE WHIHH WE EXPECT TO EMERGE MORE CLEARLY AT OUR NEXT MEETING IS WHETHER WE NOW ACCEPT THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES. WE ASSUME THAT THE DIFFICULTIES WE HAD WITH PRINCIPLE SIX ARE NO LONGER RELEVANT IF ALL MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE IN JUSMAG AND IF ALL OTHER TECHNICAL PERSONNEL ARE CIVILIANS; WE ASSUME THAT ON THESE GROUNDS WE CAN SUBSCRIBE TO THE PRINCIPLES AS APPLYING TO THOSE CATEGORIES OF PERSONNEL OUTSIDE JUSMAG WE WOULD HAVE IN THAILAND UNDER THIS ARRANGEMENT. WOULD APPRECIATE CONFIRMATION THAT THIS IS SO.
WHITEHOUSE

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED DOD, JCS, CINCPAC, CINCPACAF, NSA.

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